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FOREIGN SERVICE DESPATCH

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DESP. NO.

FROM : AMEMBASSY, GUATEMALA

TO : THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON.

February 3, 1954.
DATE

REF : Embassy's Telegram of January 29, 1954.

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	ARA-4	REP-2 OAI-6 UNA-4 EUR/X-1
	REC'D 2/5	INFO OTHER CIA-7 LAB-3 USIA-10 ISD-2 OCB

SUBJECT: EXPULSION OF FREE LABOR LEADERS FROM GUATEMALA

On January 25 a group of men, obviously Guatemalan plainclothes police, raided the headquarters of the anti-Communist labor organization Unión Nacional de Trabajadores Libres (UNTL), arresting Rubén D. VILLATORO, Enrique CORONADO, Ramiro AGUILAR C., and Miguel ANGEL Quiroa, the first three President, Secretary and Treasurer of that organization. The exact position of Quiroa in the organization is unknown, although press reports have spoken of him also as a Secretary. Following the arrest, the Embassy heard nothing about the whereabouts of these individuals until the afternoon of January 28 when two women claiming to be sisters of Villatoro called to say that another sister living in Quezaltenango had received a message from Villatoro from Tapachula, Mexico, near where he had been placed across the border by the police without money or extra clothing. The message requested that the sisters obtain from the police a wallet, necktie, and coat which they had taken from him. Similar reports regarding the exiling of Villatoro appeared in the press that evening. Although the press at the time treated these reports as unconfirmed, newspapers later reported their confirmation.

No information has reached the Embassy as to the fate of the other UNTL leaders, although it has been suggested in the press that they have been expelled into Honduras and El Salvador. The case of Quiroa, if suddenly exiled without resources, would be particularly difficult since he has only one leg.

The police have denied knowledge of the arrest or whereabouts of the UNTL leaders.

Obviously, as justification for the arbitrary treatment of the UNTL leaders, the Communist Victor Manuel GUTIERREZ, Secretary General of the Confederación General de Trabajadores de Guatemala (CGTG) and Deputy in the

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National Congress, declared when speaking before the latter body on February 1: "The Union of Free Workers, which has been accused of being in connivance with the American Embassy in Guatemala, lent itself to the taking of motion pictures of the public manifestations which it carried on against unemployment, for misleading exhibition in the United States."

Actually, the UNTL has had no substantial connection with the Embassy. Its leaders have called here several times to request financial assistance which was always refused them and to ask for general labor and anti-Communist propaganda which was handed out to them.

The Embassy has no knowledge of the filming of the small unemployment demonstrations which the UNTL's predecessor organization conducted last July.

For the Chargé d'Affaires a.i.:

Andrew B. Wardlaw
First Secretary of Embassy